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cles in THE CONDOR, and who for a decade or more was engaged in making extensive collections of the eggs of Utah birds, tells me that he has not seen a Franklin gull in Utah. Another well informed student of the bird life of this state, Prof. Marcus E. Jones, is quoted by Davie, "Nests and Eggs of North American Birds," on the nesting habits of the California gull, but no reference to him appears in connection with the Franklin gull. Ridgway in "Notes on the Bird Fauna of the Salt Lake Valley," and in "Ornithology of the Fortieth Parallel;" Merriam, "Sixth Annual Report, U. S. Geol. Survey"; Henshaw—quoting Ridgway—in "Annotated List of Utah Birds;" and Cooke in, "Birds of Colorado," all name the Utah gull *Larus californicus*.

It would be of interest to know what data led Prof. Bailey to call this bird, *Larus franklini*.

Provo City, Utah.

### The Birds of the John Day Region, Oregon

BY LOVE HOLMES MILLER

THE observations<sup>a</sup> here recorded were made during May and June of 1899 and with the collections now in the Biology Department of the University, comprise the work done on the ornithology of the John Day region by the first University of California expedition into that part of the country.

A good general account of the expedition was given before the Science Association of the University by the geologist in charge, Dr. John C. Merriam<sup>b</sup>

What need be added to this account will be those points regarding the topography that will bear directly upon the bird life. The locality known as the Cove is that part of the John Day basin about fifteen miles northwest of Dayville, and is some one hundred miles due southeast of The Dalles. Bridge Creek is a tributary entering the John Day, about sixty-five miles from its junction with the Columbia.

The expedition was in the field from May 25 to July 10. A distance of some three hundred miles was covered in the round trip and a range of elevation from the low, hot country on the Columbia to the pine belt in the Blue Mts. Three permanent camps were made: first at the Bridge Creek beds, June 1 to 12; second, at the Cove, Blue Basin, June 19 to 28; third, at Lower Basin in the Cove, June 29 to July 2. Thus there were twenty-five days in which collecting could be done. Half of this time was devoted to biology, making not more than thirteen days for making collections. The collection numbers fifty-four birds and ten mammals with a few reptiles and batrachians.

In his general discussion Dr. Merriam speaks of the desert character of the country and the extreme paucity of living species. The region is indeed most disappointing to the collector in search of existing forms, or to one on mere pleasure bent, yet I think there is not one in the party but considers this chapter in his experience one of the most enjoyable and profitable.

The Bridge Creek Camp was made at Allen's ranch, ten miles up Bear Creek from its junction with the John Day and twelve miles from Mitchell. The valley

<sup>a</sup> Published by permission of Professor W. E. Ritter, head of Department of Biology.

<sup>b</sup> "An expedition to the John Day Region, Oregon," J. C. Merriam, Proc. Sci. Assoc. Univ. of Calif., Vol. I, No. 1.

at this point is about one and one-half miles wide, Bridge Creek joining Bear Creek here. The creek runs between perpendicular banks of soft dirt twelve or more feet high in places. For some one hundred yards along the stream extends a narrow copse of scrubby willows entangled with vines. The remainder of the valley floor is covered with the natural growth of sage, three to five feet high. Allen's ranch gives some diversity to the collector by furnishing a half dozen fruit trees, a few poplars, an irrigating ditch with its few yards of willows and sedge, and a twenty acre field of alfalfa hay.

Up the tributary ravines to the east, toward the fossil beds, a few scrubby junipers occur in the valley floor. Above the fossil cliff rise lava terraces to a height of several thousand feet, eight terraces being distinctly visible. On the more gentle slopes between terraces a sparse growth of junipers and some bunch grass is to be found. The entire region, however, that has not been fenced in, is over run and devastated by sheep. A pocket mouse would starve in such a place; lizards are extremely rare, and snakes almost entirely wanting.

At the camp in Turtle Cove, the conditions were much the same. The altitude was slightly greater, there were no willows, but where we camped a small copse of birch and wild gooseberries shaded a small spring which kept the ground moist for a few yards down the ravine. Some distance to the north was a second ravine carrying a small stream bordered by willows for a short distance and a few scrub pines. A mile or more down the ravine and below the cliffs runs the John Day through the treeless sage of the canyon floor.

At the third camp, Lower Basin, the conditions were somewhat improved. The river makes a great bend, broadening its bed and giving room for a number of giant cottonwoods, willow copses, a small marsh and hay fields. From the south wall descends a steep ravine, well wooded with birch and leading up to the pine timber in limited patches in steep notches in the lava wall. The limited extent of the pine growth probably explains the absence of *Eutamias* for which I searched in vain. Here for the first time on the trip, one could really feel that he was not in the desert. Dearly as one may love the open sage stretches of the desert of the west, a bit of pine timber with fir and aspen making a cool twilight in the hollows is a refreshing change at the close of a six weeks trip. Unfortunately we could spend but four days at Lower Basin.

***Dendragapus obscurus*.** Dusky Grouse. A fine cock was taken at the Cove, June 24. Some half dozen were flushed from the junipers and grassy hillsides within several hundred yards, evidently one flock. The food was of green herbs, crop being stuffed with the young leaves and flower buds of a small composite growing on the hill. Mr. Davis later observed the courting dance of the species. A single male strutted with spread tail before a group of four or five females and at intervals of a minute or two emitted a single note much like the *whoo!* of the horned owl but much lower in pitch. I heard this note quite frequently in the region thereabout but took no more specimens. A nest of this bird, containing the shells of the season's eggs, was found at the Cove, June 25. It was merely a shallow excavation under a low sage bush with slight dry grass about. The shells were too scattered to allow an estimate of the number of eggs. Were there two breedings in the season or do the courting dances continue after the first brood is hatched?

***Pediæcetes p. columbianus*.** Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse. A single specimen was seen flying overhead to the sage mesa at Caleb, June 13. The bird was identified by Mr. D., an old hunter in this region. A tuft of the feathers was

picked up in a dust wallow at Cottonwood. The general color was decidedly rusty.

*Centrocercus urophasianus*. Sage Hen. A single specimen was seen by Dr. Merriam at the Cove and wounded with a revolver but it escaped. All the hunters of the region speak of it as common among the sage.

*Zenaidura macroura*. Mourning Dove. This form was met with all the way and often served to elaborate the camp menu. It was seen nesting in June in the fossil cliffs at the Cove.

*Cathartes aura*. Turkey Vulture. Noted from the steamer on the Columbia and in the country just outside The Dalles, May 24.

*Falco s. phalæna*. Desert Sparrow Hawk. Observed at Bridge Creek, June 6.

*Pandion h. carolinensis*. Osprey. One of these birds was seen at Sherar's Bridge on the Deschutes River, May 27, but it proved too wary to allow me within gunshot. I have noted this species in southern California on the Santa Ana River some sixty miles from the nearest large body of water, the so-called river being but a few inches deep.

*Bubo v. pacificus*. Western Horned Owl. This big fellow found shelter in the caverns among the fossil beds, the darkness and seclusion of the deserted place being the delight of such as he. Abundant castings, containing the bones of rodents, were found.

*Megascops a. macfarlanei* ? The familiar note of a screech owl was heard on the river at Cottonwood, June 17, at the cottonwood timber.

*Speotyto c. hypogæa*. Burrowing Owl. Observed at Eight Mile Creek, May 25.

*Dryobates v. hyloscopus* ? A single specimen observed at Lower Basin, June 27.

*Asyndesmus torquatus*. Lewis Woodpecker. Seen from the train just out of Portland, May 20. Observed on dry sage hillside on Cherry Creek, May 31. Quite abundant on fence posts along Bridge Creek and in scrubby junipers at the base of the hill; evidently breeding in the junipers at the Cove, June 22. This bird was extremely shy at all times. One morning I spent an hour or more at sunrise in trying to stalk them in a small group of junipers at Bridge Creek but they acted as sentinels for each other and could not be approached. I do not understand this extreme shyness as they seem to have no especial enemy aside from the collector and such was surely new to these birds. By stationing H. at one end of the juniper grove and making a drive of the birds one was finally taken. At Antoine on Rock Creek, at a much greater elevation, it was observed making excursions into the air evidently in pursuit of insects; a few circles and then down again to its perch on a dead pine.

*Colaptes c. collaris*. Red-shafted Flicker. Observed preparing a nest in the side of the fossil cliff at the Cove, June 23. Numerous smaller or larger holes occur in the furrowed deposit often leading into larger caverns within. From one of these I flushed a flicker that acted in a very conscious manner, suggesting a nest at once. I could not climb to the place to make sure of the bird's intentions nor note its work. On the following day, however, I found another hole likewise inaccessible, from which after the stimulus of a few well directed stones, there proceeded the hissing squeak of young flickers, thus proving the flicker to have adapted itself to the treeless condition of the region. The species was quite abundant along the river at Lower Basin.

*Ceryle alcyon*. Kingfisher. Observed at Eight Mile Creek, May 17, and at Rock Creek, June 14.

**Phalænoptilus nuttalli.** Poor-will. Several of these birds were heard whistling at dusk about the low hills at Bridge Creek beds, June 6, but none could be taken.

**Chordeiles v. henryi.** Western Night Hawk. A morning's delay at Mitchell, June 11, gave a very good opportunity to observe a number of these birds as they flew high above the canyon, evidently spending the whole morning at play. They sometimes flew at such a height as to be scarcely visible, all the time uttering their jarring note; suddenly one would drop directly downward a distance of one hundred feet or more, bringing up with a graceful turn and a loud whirring boom. A specimen was taken at the Cove on June 25, where it acted as if nesting.

**Stellula calliope.** Calliope Hummer. Quite a number of these small hummers were noted in the side canyon above Lower Basin, June 30. Several taken.

**Tyrannus tyrannus.** Kingbird. First seen at Cottonwood June 17. A few noted at Lower Basin along the river but none could be taken.

**Tyrannus verticalis.** Western Kingbird. Seen about town at The Dalles, May 22. At the Cove this bird sometimes awakened us at 3 A. M. by its chatter overhead. Noted in pine timber at Spanish Gulch, June 16.

**Myiarchus cinerascens.** Ash-throated Flycatcher. Observed on the Cherry Creek road May 27; at the Cove on June 27.

**Sayornis saya.** A nest of young in full plumage was found in a house at Nansene, May 26.

**Contopus richardsoni.** Western Wood Pewee. Observed over sage plain at Bridge Creek beds on June 3.

**Empidonax traillii.** Traill Flycatcher. Observed in the willows at Caleb, June 13, though the cherry trees were still in blossom and the willows bare. The note was identical with that of the same form in California.

**Pica hudsonia.** Magpie. First noted on Eight Mile Creek, May 22, where it was abundant and very shy; peculiar windmill flight and harsh cry. Noted in junipers above the Bridge Creek beds June 5. Numerous at the Cove where a well-fledged youngster was taken June 21.

**Cyanocitta s. annectens.** Several specimens observed among the pines above Lower Basin. No. 53 of the collection was taken here on June 29.

**Corvus americanus.** Common Crow. Crows were noted along the Columbia at The Dalles on May 52. Found breeding in pines at the Cove with large young flying June 26.

**Cyanocephalus cyanocephalus.** Pinyon Jay. Seen first high up among the lava terraces at the Bridge Creek beds in June. It was extremely shy and some hours were spent in trying to stalk it. It flew very high uttering a note which is exactly like that of the crow pitched higher. Specimens were shot at Cherry Creek Hill on the way back July 6; not at all shy.

**Molothrus ater.** Cowbird. Observed at Bridge Creek, June 3. A male was observed to go through the most grotesque antics in singing; the head was thrown forward to the limit of the neck and a very visible effort brought up a bubbling volley of notes not unlike those of *Scolecophagus*.

**Sturnella neglecta.** Western Meadowlark. Heard at The Dalles at sunrise May 22, singing a greeting from the sister state across the Columbia. Found at the Bridge Creek beds, not in the valley bottom as might be expected, but far up the sides among the lava terraces.

**Icterus bullocki.** Bullock Oriole. In full song at The Dalles May 22. Abundant on Bridge Creek. Noted feeding on cicadas at the Cove June 22.

**Scolecophagus cyanocephalus.** Brewer Blackbird. Cherry Creek Hill, May

30. Common in all kinds of country; seen in flocks even on the dry sage hills. Noted in the pine belt at Spanish Gulch on June 15. Not seen at the Cove.

**Hesperiphona v. montana.** Western Evening Grosbeak. Cherry Creek Hill, May 30. "The first bird note heard this morning was a peculiar metallic clink much like that of *Guiraca cerulea*. Investigation revealed a fine specimen of *Hesperiphona* in a low juniper near the tent. The bird was not at all shy allowing me to come directly under the tree as he hopped about uttering his peculiar note. A number of small flocks were observed later in the morning. The air was quite crisp and cold and the abundant growth of junipers gave the impression of mountain country proper." On June 6 at Bridge Creek, much to my surprise, a flock of these birds was found among the willows along the stream. They were easily approached, one shot securing two females and a male. Search through the junipers during the rest of our stay here failed to reveal their further occurrence. It was seen in the pine belt at Spanish Gulch on June 15.

**Carpodacus m. frontalis.** House Finch. Specimen taken at the Cove where it was common in the sage.

**Carpodacus p. californicus.** Purple Finch. Single specimen in full song taken at the Cove. Observed above the Lower Basin on June 30 in birch timber.

**Spinus pinus.** Siskin. Noted at Cherry Creek Hill on May 30.

**Astragalinus t. salicamans.** Goldfinch. A specimen in full plumage taken in willows at Bridge Creek, June 2.

**Poœcetes g. confinis.** Western Vesper Sparrow. First noted at Thorn Hollow on May 27, singing at intervals during the night, though it was cold and windy. It was easily observed the next morning on the sage hills where it was abundant and easily approached. Observed at the Cove June 24.

**Melospiza c. morphna.** Rusty Song Sparrow. Common among the willows of Bridge Creek. Specimens taken June 3. Nos. 9, 27, and 30 of the collection.

**Junco h. shufeldti** ? First noted in pine belt at Spanish Gulch. Later taken from Douglas spruce at the Cove, June 22.

**Spizella s. arizonæ.** Western Chipping Sparrow. May 17, at Eight Mile Creek. At Spanish Gulch in the pine belt on June 15.

**Spizella breweri.** Brewer Sparrow. Quite common on Bridge Creek in sage feeding on caterpillars. It had a pleasing little song and was doubtless nesting though long search failed to prove it so. Noted at the Cove on June 23.

**Zonotrichia l. gambeli** ? Specimens noted at Calab, June 15.

**Chondestes g. strigatus.** Western Lark Sparrow. Observed at Eight Mile Creek on May 19 and at the Cove June 23.

**Zamelodia melanocephala.** Black-headed Grosbeak. Took a fine male from the willows on Bridge Creek, June 6. Noticed feeding on cicadas at the Cove, June 22.

**Cyanospiza amœna.** Lazuli Bunting. Seen first at Eight Mile Creek, May 17. A very abundant form in the sage at Bridge Creek. In full song everywhere and doubtless breeding in the tall sage.

**Pipilo m. oregonus.** Oregon Towhee. Specimen No. 26 is of this species taken in sage on Bridge Creek June 7. No. 48, at the Cove on June 27.

**Oreospiza chlorura.** Green-tailed Towhee. First seen at Spanish Gulch, June 15 in pine timber, within 200 feet of the snow. The following day it was heard singing on a hot hillside in typical sage country on Birch Creek.

**Piranga ludoviciana.** Western Tanager. Quite common at mouth of Bridge Creek on May 31. Later it was taken at the Bridge Creek beds where it was abundant among the junipers and in sage feeding on small caterpillars. It was occasional at the Cove also.

**Hirundo erythrogastra.** Barn Swallow. Bridge Creek, June 6.

**Tachycineta t. lepida.** Violet-green Swallow. Observed flying over Bridge Creek on June 6.

**Stelgidopteryx serripennis.** Rough-winged Swallow. Observed along the stream at Bridge Creek, June 7. Probably nesting in the soft banks.

**Ampelis cedrorum.** Cedar Bird. Noted among the birches at Lower Basin, June 30, in flocks of eight to ten and very shy.

**Vireo g. swainsoni.** Western Warbling Vireo. Two taken in full song in willows on Bridge Creek, June 10. A family of large young was noted in birches at Lower Basin, June 28.

**Dendroica aestiva.** Yellow Warbler. First seen among willows at Eight Mile Creek on May 25. Abundant on Birch Creek and at the Cove.

**Dendroica nigrescens.** Black-throated Gray Warbler. On June 2, it was found in some numbers among the junipers at foot of Bridge Creek beds. It was extremely shy and no specimen could be obtained.

**Dendroica auduboni.** Audubon Warbler. A single specimen was observed above the Lower Basin, June 27.

**Geothlypis t. occidentalis.** Western Yellow-throat. First noted on Eight Mile Creek on May 25. Abundant also on Bridge Creek in June.

**Geothlypis tolmiei.** Tolmie Warbler. A single specimen was taken in a birch tree at the Cove, June 25. Several were taken in willows at Lower Basin July 1.

**Icteria v. longicauda.** Long-tailed Chat. Quite common in willows on Bridge Creek, June 2.

**Wilsonia p. pileolata.** Pileolated Warbler. A female was taken feeding in willows on Bridge Creek, June 10.

**Setophaga ruticilla.** American Redstart. A single male was taken in full song among the willows on river at Lower Basin, July 1. The plumage however was quite immature. The specimen is No. 53 of the collection.

**Oroscoptes montanus.** Sage Thrasher. First noted at Thorn Hollow on May 27. I consider this bird the finest of the songsters next to the mocking bird. The pureness of his notes equals those of the mocker but the range is not so great. He has the charm of originality however. A peculiar trick of the bird was observed at sunrise one morning on a flower-covered hilltop. One was seen to start upward flying in small, irregular circles until it disappeared directly overhead.

**Salpinctes obsoletus.** Rock Wren. High up among the lava terraces of Bridge Creek, I found this species among the junipers, not entirely confined to the rocks but frequently perched high on a dead juniper, singing a quite varied song involving several musical intervals, the character still *Salpinctes* however. June 4.

**Troglodytes a. parkmani.** Western House Wren. A single specimen was observed in the side canyon above the Lower Basin, June 30.

**Catherpes m. conspersus.** Canyon Wren. First seen, May 27, at Sherar's Bridge. On June 5 it was found among the lava terraces on Bridge Creek in full song and among the beds at the Cove on June 22.

**Parus gambeli.** Mountain Chickadee. June 15, seen and heard singing among the pines and Douglas spruce at Spanish Gulch. The song is a beautiful, clear whistle of two long notes—A'' and G,'' the G'' tone held slightly the longer. On June 27, it was found not at all rare among the willows and cottonwoods along the river at Lower Basin.

**Regulus calendula.** Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Observed among leafless willows at Caleb on June 13.

**Hylocichla ustulata.** Russet-backed Thrush. The song of this bird was heard among the leafless willows at Caleb, June 13, at dusk which is the favorite hour for its concerts. An hour was spent in vain effort to stalk this wary fellow in order to make the identification absolute. The failure was most unfortunate as the song and call note were both slightly different from that of this species in Berkeley.

**Merula m. propinqua.** Western Robin. This was one of the first species noted May 24. In full song at The Dalles about the yards in town. May 25, Cherry Creek hill—"Robins have been common all along the road; they are probably nesting already." May 30, Bridge Creek—"A nest was observed in low bush by roadside; contained four large young. It was so near the road as to enable one to look into it easily from the saddle without turning from his course." These birds were quite plentiful in the sage of Bridge Creek, where they fed upon a small caterpillar found there. We observed them at all points on the road and in all sorts of country up to the pine belt at Spanish Gulch. At the Cove they were observed feeding on cicadas on dry hillsides.

**Sialia m. occidentalis.** Western Bluebird. This species was abundant in flocks with large young among the pines above the Lower Basin. June 27.

**Sialia arctica.** Mountain Bluebird. A single specimen was observed at Currant Creek hill on May 29, and one other at base of the fossil beds on Bridge Creek, June 3.

*Berkeley, California.*

### Nesting Habits of the Caracara

ADOLPH E. SCHUTZE

THE caracara, (*Polyborus cheriway*) is an abundant bird throughout southeast Texas. Since it came under my observation, about five years ago, I have paid considerable attention to its nesting habits and food. It has been my good fortune in recent years annually to make extensive trips into the surrounding country, namely Travis, Bastrop and Caldwell counties, thus enabling me to become quite familiar with the general habits of the bird. This peculiar creature possesses both the characteristics of a hawk and vulture, but is more frequently seen in company with the latter. Its flight resembles that of neither hawk nor vulture, but is very straight and rapid and I am inclined to believe that it will often go many miles for its food. On a hot summer's day it can sometimes be seen circling high overhead after the manner of a hawk.

In central Texas it is also abundant, and is met with everywhere in open country, especially in chaparral and mesquite regions where food abounds and is easy to secure. The prairies which comprise vast areas of this great state are covered in most parts by a dwarf growth of mesquite, and distributed among these are elm, oak and hackberry trees of normal height, which afford good nesting places. I have found them breeding in heavy timbered creek bottoms, but on few occasions.

Its food consists of a vast amount of carrion, lizards, small snakes, various rodents and the cotton-tail rabbit. This rabbit is abundant throughout the chaparral regions of the state, and I can safely say that it forms about one-half the diet of this bird. Occasionally the remains of a rabbit is found in the bird's nest. I have often seen it in company with vultures while feeding on carrion, and on sever-